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ABSTRACT

The pressure to get students to write effectively and to think critically, and the role that literature plays in this task, is a recurring issue in the history of English instruction. In part, this debate stems from contradictory philosophies of the goals of an introductory writing class held by both writing program administrators and composition teachers themselves. One problem in the current debate over the role of literature in composition instruction stems from having neglected to search for historical solutions to modern problems. Over 200 years ago, a pedagogical plan was designed by George Jardine, Professor of Logic and Philosophy, University of Glasgow, Scotland (1774-1826) for integrating composition and the study of English literature. Jardine developed his theories out of his own observations about how students learn. His plan encourages students to think critically and to write well in their other classes. Jardine's classes included daily free writing exercises, sequenced essay assignments, peer evaluation, and the study of literature models to facilitate the development of communication skills, helping students to function in and contribute to society. Unfortunately, the renunciation of 19th-century educational theories and practices in Scotland created a gap in the scholarship of the history of rhetoric, so that Jardine is not well known. And it is by studying historical solutions to modern problems that theoretical depth and philosophical breadth is given to today's classroom practices. (Contains 29 references.) (CR)

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A History Lesson in LITCOMP:

A Nineteenth-Century Ecological Model of Writing Instruction

The pressure to get students to write effectively and to think critically, and the role that literature plays in this task is a recurring issue in the history of English instruction. In part, this debate stems from contradictory philosophies of the goals of an introductory writing class held by both writing program administrators and composition teachers themselves. Should introductory writing classes prepare students for other academic courses; produce competent, literate citizens; "empower" students; or simply introduce students to the humanities? In this country in 1901, the Pedagogical Section of the MLA investigated the relationship between reading and writing and asked, "Was good reading alone sufficient to develop good writers, or was additional training necessary? If so, what should the nature of this training be." A majority of the participants recommended reading supplemented by good instruction in composition. The next year (1902), the Pedagogical Section also questioned whether the teaching of composition should be "principally a practical business or whether it should by authorship, the production of literature." Again, the majority of participants called for a marriage of composition and literature (Stewart 20). However, the MLA's ground breaking resolution was obviously not acted upon, and the debate continued--or worse yet was ignored--in the scholarship.

In the March 1993 issue of College English, Erika Lindemann and Gary Tate formally renewed the debate over the use of imaginative literature, broadly defined, in the first year composition class. The response to these two essays was enormous, leading College English to publish a symposium on "Literature in the Composition Classroom" in the March 1995 issue. As Erwin Steinberg points out in the opening essay of this symposium, the debate over the role of literature in composition instruction is not new and cannot be resolved until we clarify the question we are seeking to answer. He explains that "the question" is often asked as why "the controversy over the use of literature in *the* composition classroom has not been resolved" when actually "there is no such thing as *the* composition classroom. There are only composition classrooms; and they have differed widely," a point he demonstrates through an analysis of composition instruction since the 1930s (266).

One problem in the current debate stems from our having neglected to search for historical solutions to our modern problems. Our profession until recently ignored the history of writing instruction, in part because that instruction most often did not take place in departments of English--a relatively new phenomenon[1]. As a result of the growing importance of historical study in composition, we are now learning that many current teaching practices have long and often politically inspired histories. Robert Connors tells us that "we may not always be able to claim that we see far because we stand on the shoulders

of giants; we do, however, stand on the shoulders of thousands of good-willed teachers and writers surprisingly like us, who faced in 1870 or 1930 problems amazingly similar to those we confront each time we enter the classroom" (49). One of those "good-willed teachers" who prefigured us is George Jardine, Professor of Logic and Philosophy at the University of Glasgow, Scotland, from 1774 to 1824.

Over two hundred years ago, Jardine designed a pedagogical plan for integrating composition and the study of English literature. From his published letters, his work Outlines of a Philosophical Education (1818,1825), and his unpublished letters and lecture notes housed in the Glasgow University Library, we find that Jardine stressed the value of using literature to help students improve their own writing and acquire skills necessary to succeed in business. Jardine believed that by integrating writing instruction with the study of English literature, he encouraged his students to think critically, to improve their communication skills, and to write well in their other classes. Jardine's primary educational goal was to prepare his students to compete for better jobs and to contribute to society. His pedagogical approach seems to encompass many current philosophies of composition instruction.

In The Democratic Intellect, George Davie labels Jardine "one of the most significant figures--at any rate, from the purely pedagogical point of view--in [the] Scottish academical tradition" (9). Davie explains that Jardine is an influential

link in the great chain of Scottish national educators. He was one of Adam Smith's favorite pupils at the University of Glasgow, and, through Smith's patronage, went to Paris with a set of introductions from David Hume. As a professor at the University of Glasgow, Jardine taught such men as Francis Jeffrey, Sir William Hamilton, 'Christopher North' and J. G Lockhart--who later became famous writers and critics. However, "Jardine was not important merely as a living embodiment of the Scottish academical inheritance. He was the chief formulator of its educational ideals" (9). In Outlines of a Philosophical Education (1818 and 1825), a treatise written for teachers, Jardine explains the "pedagogical potentialities" within the existing Scottish system of general instruction--a system of education that Jardine defended against the specialized instruction found at Oxford and Cambridge.

In Part Two of Outlines, Jardine fully described his practical teaching plan designed to help prepare his Scottish students for full participation in British society. Jardine believed that

> It ought...to be the great object of a first philosophy class to supply the means of cultivation...To secure a suitable education for young men destined to fill various and very different situations in life, the course of instruction... should be made to comprehend the elements of those... other branches of knowledge, upon which the investigation of science, and the

> successful despatch [sic] of business, are found chiefly to depend. (Outlines 31)

Jardine's Rationale for Pedagogical Change

After taking over the first year philosophy class at Glasgow, Jardine realized that neither the curriculum nor the traditional lecture method of instruction in the Scottish universities met the needs of contemporary students. The class was routinely known as the "drowsy shop of logic and metaphysics" among the students (Outlines 24). Furthermore, Jardine believed that even when the brighter students grasped the abstract principles taught in the class, they were still unprepared either for society or business. Citizens of Glasgow, a growing commercial city, echoed Jardine's thoughts on the unsuitableness of the class of philosophy. Because the University of Glasgow was governed in part by the town council, public opinion concerning the University held great influence. In an undocumented reference, Jardine quotes a published opinion of education at this time:

> Some of the classes in universities bear evident marks of their original design; being either totally, or in part, intended for the disputes and wranglings of divines, and of little use to the lawyer or physician, and still less to the merchant and the gentleman. Of this sort we reckon logic and metaphysics. These arts or sciences (for it is not agreed yet which of them

> they are) to the greatest part of students, are quite unintelliqible; and, if they could be understood, we cannot for our life discover their use. (qtd. in Outlines 26-27)

As a result of his own observations and public opinion, Jardine radically altered his class to include daily free writing exercises, sequenced essay assignments, peer evaluation, and the study of literary models to facilitate the development of communication skills, which would help his students function in and contribute to society.

Jardine's Ecological Model of Writing Instruction

In "Three Views of 101," Erika Lindemann describes three ways of approaching first year writing instruction: (1) writing as product--a content course centered in texts, (2) writing as process--expressivist courses grounded in self-discovery, and (3) writing as system--courses based on "ecological models" stressing the social context in which all writers work. Jardine's philosophy of composition instruction exemplifies the current view of "writing as system," a view based on Marilyn Cooper's 1986 ecological model of writing instruction. As described by Lindemann, "[t]he ecological model suggests that, if students learn the systems and conventions characterizing particular discourse communities, they can successfully participate in and eventually even alter these communities" (296). Jardine was attempting to prepare his Scottish students, who in many cases

were socially alienated and economically disenfranchised, for full participation within British society. He viewed the study of language (through reading and writing) as the means whereby his students could gain access to economic success:

> [In] every period of education, from first to last, the study of language, including, of course, the formation and expansion of those associations which connect thought and feeling with verbal signs, whether as used by the orator, the poet, or the philosopher, gives full scope and exercise to all the intellectual endowments,--calls into play the imagination, the memory, and the judgment--and gives birth to those rapid processes of thinking, speaking, and writing, which distinguish the accomplished scholar and the intelligent man of business. (Outlines 213-14)

Jardine's students came from diverse educational and socioeconomic backgrounds; they had limited writing experience and spoke a variety of rusticisms. The Scottish university students were often as young as thirteen or fourteen in the late eighteenth century and were graduated at age seventeen or eighteen (Hunter 211; Findlay 9-10). These students were lured away from college at an earlier age than their predecessors because of increased employment opportunities both in Scotland and abroad, opportunities which children of the working classes could not easily afford to ignore. Jardine explains that because of the shortened time spent at college, the students' education

became "less systematic and considerably more abridged. Thus, the changes which were taking place in society required a more miscellaneous and practical kind of instruction in the first philosophy class" (Outlines 28-29).

Jardine encouraged his students to acquire an understanding and appreciation of "correct, chaste and graceful English style" in order to compete with English students for jobs (Outlines 489). He finds it reprehensible that in the British educational system of his day, Greek and Latin "are taught in their most minute parts, and occupy a great portion of the time allotted for study...while the language we ourselves speak and write receives comparatively little attention" (Outlines 219). Jardine believed that by studying the language, grammar, style, ornamentation, and rhetorical figures of **English** literature, his students improved their own intellectual powers of reasoning and self-expression. He insisted that in order for his students to improve their reasoning powers and their own writing they must study "good models in poetry, eloquence, and history" and learn the "proper method of reading, and of imitating these models" (Outlines 218). In "writing as system" composition classes, students also gain academic literacy by examining and imitating a wide variety of texts rather than engaging in self-expressive writing (Lindemann, "Three Views" 297).

Jardine believed the goal of a liberal arts education was to equip the student with the ability "to arrange the knowledge communicated to him; to discover the connexion of its various

parts; to compare opinions, principles, theories; and thus at once to make that knowledge completely his own, by improving the faculties of his understanding" (Outlines 275). Students were to study literature as a way of strengthening their own writing and reasoning skills.

Jardine devised a pedagogical plan in the first philosophy class "to promote equally and gradually the general culture of the mind, and the improvement of each separate faculty" (Outlines 243). This plan, designed for a six or seven month term, encompassed three goals:

1. to accommodate the subject-matter of the lectures to the capacity and actual progress of the students.
2. to awaken a desire for information.
3. to keep alive their interest in the discussion and investigations brought before them.

Jardine's plan for both improving his students' powers of taste and instilling the "valuable habits of reflection, arrangement, and composition" (Outlines 233) typically depended on lectures and student reading but also--and of equal importance--on writing:

> One particular still remains to be stated, which the best system of instruction and the most profound knowledge of the subject can neither supersede nor supply; namely, the method of conducting a regular progressive course of exercises, performed by the student, corrected by the teacher, and afterwards

returned to them with instruction for directing their future efforts. (Outlines 239)

Specifically, Jardine first instructed his students in the history of the English language, the grammar and syntax of the language, and stylistic choices and "diversity" based on the "character and talents of individuals, or of nations" (Outlines 220-21). Likewise, current system-centered courses encourage the study of invention, arrangement, and style to determine a particular discourse community's conception of principles of good writing. As Lindemann explains, students must study texts to "understand the community's culture, what subjects it finds worth writing about, how readers and writers relate to one another, what value people place on experience, observation, interpretation, speculation, objectivity, and so on" (298).

Next, Jardine moved on to the study of literary models, following the categorical divisions made by Francis Bacon: (1) memory or historical compositions, (2) reason or philosophical treatises, and (3) imaginative fiction. Jardine does point out that these divisions are not ironclad and that it really doesn't matter into which category a composition falls: "there is no composition, under any one of these three heads, which could possibly be executed without the use of all the three faculties... (Outlines 221-22). Jardine believes that each kind of composition integrates itself with others in the way the mind integrates certain operations of reason, emotion, and the will in the production of a composition. Jardine leads his students to

study four components of all compositions: (1) the author's goal or thesis, (2) logic and evidence, (3) arrangement, and (4) style (Outlines 222). Above all else, he stresses that "arrangements are the best, which contribute most to clearness and accuracy of investigation; and that language is the most suitable, which expresses the different processes of the mind with the least possible ambiguity" (232). In ecological "writing as system" courses, students also study texts of a discourse community to determine the range of flexibility within such concepts as audience, purpose, and style; "[s]tudents come to understand that 'good writing' requires making effective choices in juggling the demands of a task, a language, a rhetoric, and an audience" (298)

Jardine introduces his students to criticism, "the set of rules...directing what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, and thereby founding, upon the basis of principle, a distinction between good and bad taste" (Outlines 234). However, Jardine insists that students first read the model essays without assistance from the critics in order to develop their own opinions of taste; then compare their thoughts and feelings regarding the piece with "those which bear the stamp of authority and of established taste" (Outlines 235). Otherwise, Jardine believes the students will always acquiesce to the critics' opinions. The primary object of introducing the study of criticism "is to afford to his pupils, from the various sources which reading and reflection have opened up to him, the means of forming for themselves a standard of taste" (Outlines 237.

As Jardine's students study criticism of a discourse community, they begin to find their place in it. Both Jardine's view of writing instruction and current ecological models share a belief that writing is epistemic--that "English 101 can introduce students to some disciplinary assumptions about using language to make knowledge" ("Three Views" 297).

"Teachers adopting the ecological model attempt to forge their English 101 classes into a community of writers.... Community, collaboration, and responsibility are the watchwords," according to Lindemann (297). This description characterizes Jardine's teaching plan as well. He believes that the writing students find most useful in college is the kind that prepares them to enter business, industry, and government; he argues that by participating in collaborative learning settings students develop interpersonal traits and skills "indispensable at once to the cultivation of science, and to the business of active life" (Outlines 394). Jardine claims that collaborative work should be an integral part of every classroom because it prepares students for normal discourse in business, government and the professions. Although never explicitly using terms such as "community" and "social context," Jardine fosters collaborative work among his students by creating a sense of community and responsibility within the classroom. In Jardine's plan, all students participate in the peer-learning procedures of the class, and all students are responsible to each other under the rules of participation. Unless they adhere to the rules of the community

and remain loyal and respectful to each other, the students will be banished from involvement within the community of their peers and denied any advantage associated with participation:

> Such as are found to disobey these injunctions are considered as academical traitors, viewed with contempt and reproach and, if the fact be proved against them, they are subjected to a forfeiture of their privilege...and deprived of the honours which they themselves may have otherwise deserved. (Outlines 390)

Jardine goes so far as to compare the rules governing the interaction of his students to public communities and suggests that "it would be well for the public if laws of higher authority were as regularly observed, and as seldom violated" as they were in his classroom (Outlines 371). Like ecological models of writing instruction, Jardine's teaching plan "reinforces the principle that students really are writing for one another, for the class-as-discourse-community, which will eventually judge their work" ("Three Views" 299).

Lindemann explains that in evaluating student writing, some teachers "emphasize communal standards for good writing, standards developed in the context of the English 101 class itself" and claim that "with proper training, students can be as capable and conscientious as teachers in evaluating student writing responsibly" ("Three Views 298-99). Similarly, Jardine designed a plan of peer-review whereby students were responsible for examining each others' themes according to his detailed

instructions. He encourages students to assume responsibility for one another in preparation for responsible participation in society. Jardine claims that by encouraging students to assume responsibility for the academic progress of each other, teachers will foster a notable increase in self-worth and group pride of the students (Outlines 374). In regard to the students' marking of themes as compared to his own evaluation, Jardine says that "upon more minute attention, I have frequently found reason to prefer the judgement of the students to my own" (Outlines 393). He believes that the teacher should move to the perimeter of the action of collaborative learning and allow the students freedom to exert their own opinions and learn from one another. In fact, Jardine surmises that by the end of the term, "the character, the abilities, the diligence, an the progress of students, are as well known to one another as their faces" as a result of their intense interaction with each other (Outlines 388).

Conclusion

Jardine's conduct of the first philosophy class was enormously successful during his own time and continued by his successor, Reverend Robert Buchanan (Evidence 38). So why do we not know of Jardine's work. Unfortunately, the pedagogical contributions that Jardine made to writing instruction were disregarded before the end of the nineteenth-century in a series of educational reforms, which resulted in the Scottish universities modelling the educational philosophies and methods

of the English universities of Oxford and Cambridge. The renunciation of nineteenth-century educational theories and practices in Scotland created a gap in the scholarship of the history of rhetoric, a gap that resulted in the loss of important contributions to educational practices. Robert Connors points out that we are particularly ignorant of the period from 1790 to 1850 (68), the period in which Jardine's work occurred. We need to invest the time and effort into researching the work of our predecessors, particularly their practical teaching plans. Alexander Bain, Jardine's contemporary who greatly influenced twentieth-century writing instruction in this country, credits Jardine for doing "more for the intellectual improvement of his pupils than any other public instructor in [Scotland] within the memory of man" (6). Yet, we know very little about Jardine, perhaps in part because his primary published work, Outlines, is a philosophical treatise written primarily for educators. Its contents, while accessible and punctuated with practical teaching advice, was written in prose form and not intended nor easily appropriated as a textbook. In addition, Jardine was not self-promoting, nor did he publish a great deal. He developed his theories about how students learn out of his own observations. We would currently label Jardine's work "practitioner research," a form of inquiry often undervalued.

Donald Stewart asks "how can historical knowledge liberate composition teachers from theory and practice which are dated and ineffective?" He says the answer is obvious, "that the

composition teacher who has it is flexible. She knows the contexts in which theories have been put forth and applied; she knows those who put them forth; and she is able to detect their modern counterparts and to anticipate the appropriateness and potential effectiveness of old ideas in new garments" (22). Most importantly, by studying historical solutions to what we believe are modern problems, we give theoretical depth and philosophical breadth to our own classroom practices. George Jardine's pedagogical plan offers a utilitarian model for integrating the study of belleletttres and composition in order to help students acquire critical thinking and language skills necessary to compete in society. Jardine's contributions to rhetorical theory and practice merit further scholarly attention.

Notes

1. See the following works for a history of the evolution of departments of English:

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